Islamic Academy of Coventry

Sīrah of Muḥammad ﷺ

Part 4 - The Early Years of Prophethood

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Sīrah of Muḥammad صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيۡهِوَسَلَّمَ
Part 4 - The Early Years of Prophethood
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Introduction

I begin in the name of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى Lord of the Worlds, and sending Peace & Salutations on our beloved Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was born on a Monday morning in the month of Rabīʿ Al-Awwal. It was the year of the Elephant which corresponded to 571 CE. He had lost his father ʿAbdullāh even before he was born and throughout his childhood lost many more of those who were closest to him.

He had been given the name 'Muḥammad' by his grandfather which means 'the one who is praised'. As per the custom of the Quraysh, he spent the first few years of his life with the tribe of Banū Saʿad ibn Bakr, in the house of Ḥalimah رَضِيَ ٱللَّٰهُ عَنْهَا. His presence would become a means of many blessings in her house.

During his stay with the Banū Saʿad, Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ chest was spilt open for the first time and his heart was washed. After returning to Makkah, at the tage of 6, he went with his mother on a trip to Madīnah. On the return journey she fell ill and passed away.

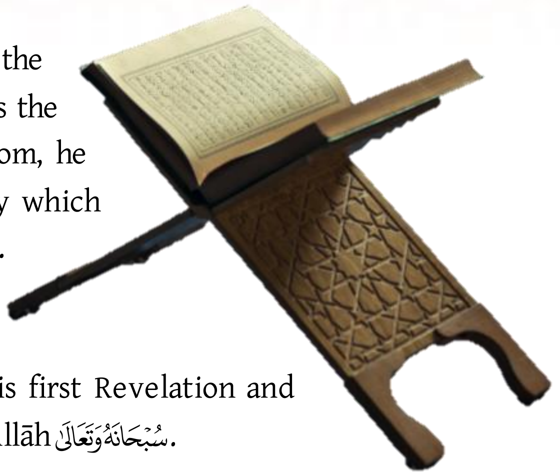
Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was then looked after by his grandfather ʿAbdul Muṭṭalib. He also passed away when Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was only 8 years old. He then came under the care of his uncle, Abū Ṭālib, who would look after and protect his nephew for over 40 years.

Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيۡهِوَسَلَّمَ grew up with all of the best qualities. He was honest, trustworthy, kind & generous. His reputation resulted in a rich widow, Sayyidah Khadījah رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنۡهَا hiring him to sell goods on her behalf. The trade mission was a success and soon she would send him a proposal for marriage.

Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيۡهِوَسَلَّمَ got married at the age of 25 while his wife, Sayyidah Khadījah رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنۡهَا was 40 years old. They would go on to lead a very happy and blissful married life.

Makkah was home to the House of Allāh سُبۡحَانَهُۥوَتَعَالَىٰ, the Kaʿbah. It had come into a state of disrepair and the Quraysh decided to rebuild it. Each tribe was given the responsibility of rebuilding a certain side but when the time came to put the black stone (Ḥajare Aswad) back in its place, each tribe wanted this honour. The argument became serious and they were ready to come to blows when Abū Ummayah made a suggestion. The first person who enters the door of the Masjid on the following day would be the arbitrator and settle the matter.

It so happened that the Mercy of the Worlds, Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيۡهِوَسَلَّمَ was the first to enter and using his wisdom, he settled the matter in such a way which was amicable to all of the parties.



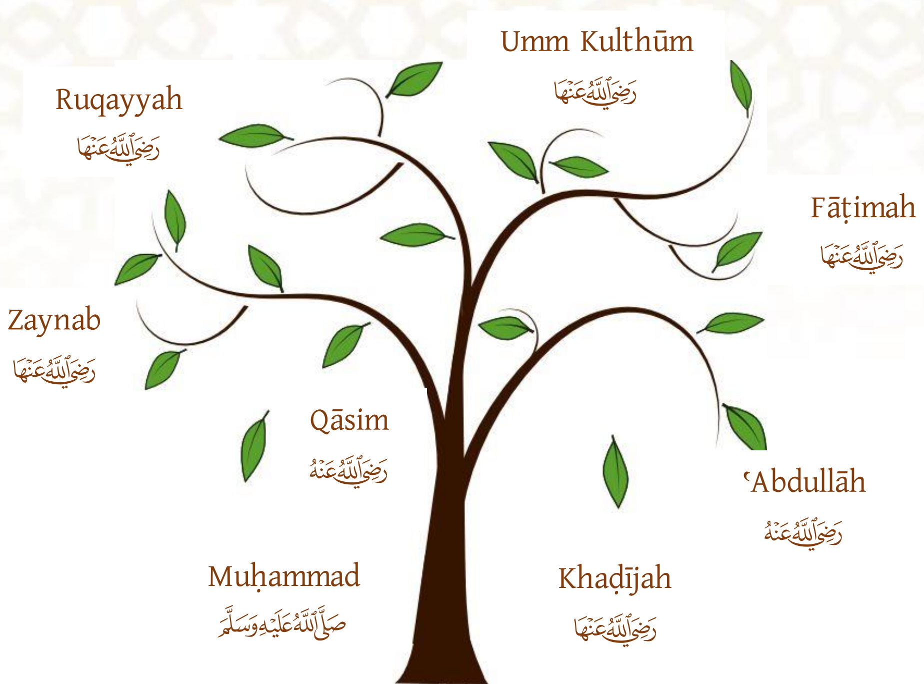
In this booklet we will see how Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيۡهِوَسَلَّمَ received his first Revelation and became the Final Messenger of Allāh سُبۡحَانَهُۥوَتَعَالَىٰ.

The Prophets' Household

The Children of Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيۡهِوَسَلَّمَ & Khaḍījah رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنۡهَا

Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيۡهِوَسَلَّمَ and Sayyidah Khaḍījah رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنۡهَا had 6 children together, 2 sons and 4 daughters.

The first child they had together was a boy, whose name was Qāsim رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنۡهُ. Next, they had a daughter, who they named Zaynab رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنۡهَا. She was followed by 3 more daughters, Ruqayyah رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنۡهَا, Umm Kulthūm رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنۡهَا and Fāṭimah رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنۡهَا. Finally they had another son who was named ʿAbdullāh رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنۡهُ.



Qāsim رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ

As mentioned earlier, Qāsim رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ was the first born of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. He passed away before Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ received Prophethood and lived for only 2 years. Other opinions are that he reached an age understanding before he passed away. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ Kunyah-teknonym was Abul- Qāsim.

قاسم

Zaynab رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا

Zaynab رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا ↔ Abu Al-ʿĀs ibn Rabiʿ رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ

ʿAlī

Umāmah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا.

Zaynab رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا was the eldest daughter of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and was born when he was around 30 years old, 10 years before Prophethood. She passed away in the beginning of the 8th year of Hijri at around 31 years of age.

She was married to Abu Al-ʿĀs ibn Rabiʿ رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ who was the son of Khadījah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا sister, so she was married to her maternal cousin.

Zaynab رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا had embraced Islām during the early days but it was quite a while before her husband became a follower. Her story will be covered in detail when we discuss the Battle of Badr.

Zaynab رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا and Abu Al-ʿĀs ibn Rabiʿ رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ had 2 children together, a boy named ʿAlī and a girl named Umāmah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا.

With regards to ʿAlī, there is a difference of opinion as to how long he lived. The preferred opinion is that he reached an age of understanding and then passed away during the lifetime of his father Abu Al-ʿĀs ibn Rabiʿ رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ. Another opinion was that he was martyred in the Battle of Yarmūk.

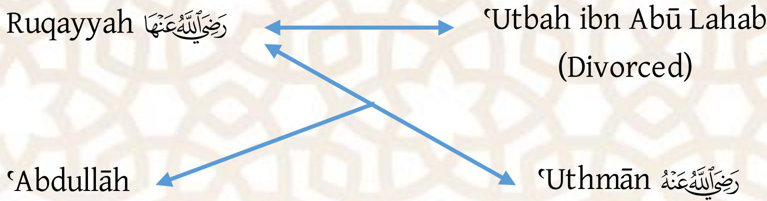
With regards to Umāmah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا, Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ loved his granddaughter very much and she was very attached to him. When she was young, she used to climb on the blessed back of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ whilst he would be performing Ṣalāt. He would then lower her down gently.

After her aunt Fāṭimah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا passed away, Umāmah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا married ʿAlī رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ. ʿAlī رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ made a bequest that after he passes away Mughayrah ibn Nawfal رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ should marry her. After ʿAlī رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ was martyred she married Mughayrah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ.

According to some reports, she bore Mughayrah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ a son who was named Yaḥyā. According to other reports she had no children and passed away whilst she was married to Mughayrah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ.

زينب

Ruqayyah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا



Ruqayyah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا was the second daughter of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Together with her sister Umm Kulthūm رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا, she had married one of her father's paternal cousins. She had married ʿUtbah ibn Abū Lahab and her sister had married his brother ʿUtaybah. The Nikāḥ had taken place but the marriage had not been consummated.

When Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ revealed Sūrah Lahab, Abū Lahab called his 2 sons ʿUtbah and ʿUtaybah and told them to divorce their wives. The sons obeyed their fathers command.

Later on, Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ gave his daughter Ruqayyah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا to ʿUthmān رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ in marriage. When ʿUthmān رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ migrated to Abyssinia, she also accompanied him. Whilst over there, they had a son who they named ʿAbdullāh. He passed away at the age of 6.

She came back to Madīnah and when Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was leaving for Badr in the 2nd year of Hijri, she had fallen ill. ʿUthmān رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ was given permission to remain behind and look after her.

When Zayd ibn Ḥārithah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ came to Madīnah with news of the Muslim victory, Ruqayyah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا had passed away. She was 20 years old at the time.

Umme Kulthūm رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا

Umme Kulthūm رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا ⟷ ʿUtaybah ibn Abū Lahab (Divorced)

ʿUthmān رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ

Umme Kulthūm رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا was the 3rd daughter of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Her name is a Kunyah and this was in actual fact her name. She was not known by any other names.

Like her sister, Umme Kulthūm رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا had also married one of the sons of Abū Lahab, ʿUtaybah. When Abū Lahab commanded his sons to divorce their wives, ʿUtbah carried out the command, however ʿUtaybah went one step further. He went to Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and told him that he did not follow his religion and he has divorced his daughter. He then said that she didn't like him and he didn't like her. After this he attacked Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and tore the robe he was wearing.

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ then supplicated to Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ against ʿUtaybah and prayed that one of Allāh's animals overcomes him.

It so happened that on one occasion Abū Lahab and his son ʿUtaybah were travelling with a Qurayshi trade caravan towards Shām and stopped at a place called Zarqā'. At night time a lion came to their camp. The lion passed by all the people, looking into their faces and sniffing them. When he reached ʿUtaybah, he attacked him right away and

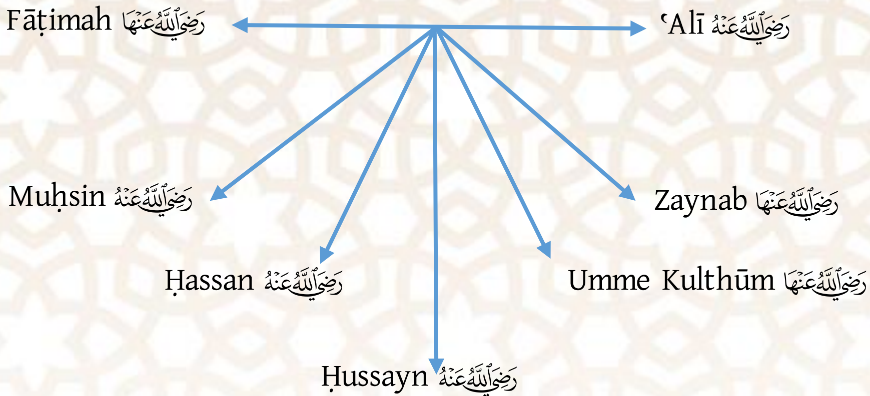
Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيۡهِ وَسَلَّمَ prayer was answered. After the lion killed ʿUtaybah, it went away and was nowhere to be seen.

After Ruqayyah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنۡهَا passed away, Umme Kulthūm رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنۡهَا married ʿUthmān رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنۡهُ in the month of Rabīʿ Al-Awwal in the 3rd year of Hijri. They stayed together for 6 years and had no children together.

She passed away in the month of Shaʿbān in the 9th year of Hijri and Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيۡهِ وَسَلَّمَ led her funeral prayers. She was then lowered into her resting place by ʿAlī, Faḍl ibn ʿAbbās and Usāmah ibn Zayd رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنۡهُمۡ. Umme Kulthūm رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنۡهَا was still in her twenties when she passed away.

أم كلثوم

Fāṭimah رَضِيَ ٱللَّٰهُ عَنْهَا



Fāṭimah رَضِيَ ٱللَّٰهُ عَنْهَا was the youngest daughter of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. According to some reports she was born in the first year of Prophethood and according to others, she was born 5 years before Prophethood during the time when the Kaʿbah was being rebuilt.

Fāṭimah رَضِيَ ٱللَّٰهُ عَنْهَا was also known as Zahrā' and Batūl. She was known as Zahrā' because of her internal beauty, splendour and purity. The meaning of the word Batūl means 'to be cut off'. One of the reasons she was given this name, could have been because, due to her merits and virtues she was 'cut off' from the other women.

She married ʿAlī رَضِيَ ٱللَّٰهُ عَنْهُ in the second year of Hijri. According to some opinions, she was 15 years and 5 and a half months of age at the time. According to another opinion, she was 19 years and 1 and a half months old. ʿAlī رَضِيَ ٱللَّٰهُ عَنْهُ was either 21 years and 5 months or 24 years and 2 and a half months of age when he married her.

Together they had 5 children, 3 boys, Ḥassan, Ḥussayn and Muḥsin رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ and 2 girls, Umme Kulthūm and Zaynab رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا.

Muḥsin رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ passed away in his childhood. Umme Kulthūm رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا was married to ʿUmar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ but they had no children together. Zaynab رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا was married to ʿAbdullāh ibn Jaʿfar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and they had children together. The progeny of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ only continued through the children of Fāṭimah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا.

6 months after Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ passed away, in the month of Ramaḍān, 11th Hijri, Fāṭimah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا also passed away. ʿAbbās رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ led her funeral prayers and then along with ʿAlī, and Faḍl رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا lowered her into her resting place.

فاطمة

The Extended Household of Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ

Umm Ayman رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهَا

Apart from Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ and his immediate family, there were also others who were part of his household.

When Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ father ʿAbdullāh had passed away, he had left behind an Abyssinian slave called Barakah. When Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ got married, he set her free. Barakah got married to a man from Yathrib and had a son called Ayman, so she became known as Umm Ayman رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهَا.

Zayd ibn Ḥārithah رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ

Zayd رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ came from a tribe called Kalb which was in the northern parts of the Arabian Peninsula. As a child his mother had taken him on a visit. During their stay, the village was raided and he was kidnapped. He was sold into slavery and ended up at the great fair of Ukkāz. Here, he was purchased by Ḥakīm who was the nephew of Khaḍījah رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهَا.

On one occasion, Khaḍījah رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهَا visited Ḥakīm and he called for the slaves he had just purchased to be presented to her. From all of them, she chose Zayd رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ. Khaḍījah رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهَا then gifted this youth to her husband. He was 15 years of age.

Ḥārithah

Zayd رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ father was called Ḥārithah. He had been searching for his son ever since he had been taken away.

People from all over Arabia used to come to the Kaʿbah for pilgrimage so Zayd رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ used to look out for people from his tribe. The reason for this was so that he could send a message to his family to inform them where he was. They would be relieved that their son was alive and safe and in the best of places.

A few months after Zayd رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ had been given to Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, he saw some people from his tribe in the streets of Makkah. Now this caused a bit of an issue. If he had seen these people before he came to live with Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, then his feelings would have been very different. But now he was living with Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, what should he do? He had to also tell his parents where he was to put their minds at rest so he composed a poem and told the people from his tribe to speak the lines to his family.

Carry a message from me to my people,
For I am far away,
That close to the House and the places of pilgrimage I stay.
Let go of the grief that has deeply saddened you,
And do not hasten your camels all over the earth.
I live with the best of families, may God be blessed,
From father to son, of Ma'ad they are the noblest.

The people from the tribe of Zayd رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ went back to Kalb and informed his father Ḥārithah. As soon as Ḥārithah found out that his son had been found, he headed straight for Makkah with his brother.

To Makkah

Ḥārithah arrived in Makkah with his brother and went to see Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. He asked Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ to let them ransom Zayd رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ so he could be free and go back with them.

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said to Ḥārithah, 'let him choose, if he chooses you, then he is yours without ransom and if he chooses me, I am not the man to set any other above him who chooses me'.

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ called for Zayd رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ and asked him if he recognised these 2 men who had come, he replied 'Yes, this is my father and this is my uncle'.

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ then asked him to choose between him and his family. Zayd رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ said 'I would not choose any man in preference to you'. When his father heard his choice, he said to his son, 'Will you choose slavery over freedom and your father and uncle and family?' Zayd رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ said yes, and the reason he gave was that he had seen from this man such things that he could not choose another above him.

Subhānallāh, imagine Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ character, even the slaves in his household would prefer to stay with him than their own families as free people!

The Proclamation

Rasūlullāh ﷺ then requested that they all come to the Kaʿbah with him. Rasūlullāh ﷺ arrived there and proclaimed in a loud voice "All ye who are present, bear witness that Zayd is my son, I am his heir and he is mine"

Ḥārithah and his brother then left Makkah to go back to Kalb but they knew that their son was free and living in honour. This is how Zayd رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ came to the household of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and chose to live with him over his own family.



ʿAlīʿ رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ

On one occasion there was a drought in the Ḥijāz. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ uncle Abū Ṭālib had many children and it was difficult for him to look after all of their needs during this difficult period.

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ saw this and wanted to help him. He went to his uncle ʿAbbās رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ who was a successful merchant and suggested that each of them should take one of Abū Ṭālibs sons. They would look after them until Abū Ṭālibs situation got better.

They both agreed and went to see Abū Ṭālib. He heard what they had to say and told them to leave ʿAqīl and Ṭālib with him. Another one of his sons was called Jaʿfar رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ who was about 15 years old. ʿAbbās رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ said he would take charge of him. There was also another son, younger than Jaʿfar whose name was ʿAlīʿ رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ decided to take charge of him. So this is how ʿAlīʿ رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ entered the household of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.



The Beginning of Revelation

The first chapter in the most authentic collection of Aḥādīth, Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhāri discusses how the Revelation started to come to Rasūlullāh ﷺ.

باب كَيْفَ كَانَ بَدْءُ الْوَحْيِ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم

The 3rd Ḥadīth in this chapter gives a very detailed account of the incident when Rasūlullāh ﷺ started to receive the Waḥī (Revelation). It is narrated by ʿĀ'ishah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا and she says that the Divine Inspiration started in the form of good dreams. Whichever dream he would see, it would become true like the morning light. These dreams were a sign that the light of Prophethood was about to come to Rasūlullāh ﷺ.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ then developed a love for seclusion and withdrawing himself from other people. He used to seclude himself in the cave of Ḥirā and worship Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى.

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ أُمِّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنَّهَا قَالَتْ أَوَّلُ مَا بُدِئَ بِهِ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم مِنَ الْوَحْيِ الرُّؤْيَا الصَّالِحَةُ فِي النَّوْمِ فَكَانَ لاَ يَرَى رُؤْيَا إِلاَّ جَاءَتْ مِثْلَ فَلَقِ الصُّبْحِ ثُمَّ حُبِّبَ إِلَيْهِ الْخَلاَءُ وَكَانَ يَخْلُو بِغَارِ حِرَاءٍ فَيَتَحَنَّثُ فِيهِ ـ وَهُوَ التَّعَبُّدُ[1]

[1] Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhāri - 3

Jabal Nūr

The cave of Ḥirā is on top of a mountain called Jabal Nūr. This mountain lies on the outskirts of Makkah, about 5km away from the Ḥaram. The mountain is approximately 640m which is quite high. It has a very distinctive shape, as the top looks like a camels hump.



You can see the mountain from another angle in the picture below.



The Cave of Ḥirā

The cave itself is very small and its opening faces the Kaʿbah. To get to the cave, you have to actually climb across the top of the mountain and then go down slightly before you can go inside. It gets very busy especially in times of Ḥajj and it's not an easy climb.



Iqra' - Read

When Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was 40 years old, he was in the cave of Ḥira when the Angel Jibrīl عَلَيْهِ ٱلسَّلَامُ entered. He gave Salām and said to Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ 'Iqra' which means read.

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ replied 'I cannot read'. We have to remember that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was 'ummi', meaning he was unlettered, he could not read or write. This adds to the miracle of the Qur'ān, that he was able to preserve it without being able to read it.

Jibrīl عَلَيْهِ ٱلسَّلَامُ took hold of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and squeezed him until he could not bear it any longer. He then let go and again he said to him 'Iqra', read. Again Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said I cannot read.

Once more Jibrīl عَلَيْهِ ٱلسَّلَامُ took hold of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and squeezed him. Again he told him to read, again Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ replied, I cannot read.



The First Revelation

The Angel took hold of Rasūlullāh ﷺ a third time, squeezed him, and said:

ٱقْرَأْ بِٱسْمِ رَبِّكَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ (١)

خَلَقَ ٱلْإِنسَـٰنَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ (٢) ٱقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ ٱلْأَكْرَمُ (٣) ٱلَّذِى عَلَّمَ

بِٱلْقَلَمِ (٤) عَلَّمَ ٱلْإِنسَـٰنَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ (٥)

‘Read in the name of your Lord who Created
Created man from a clot
Read and your Lord is the most Generous
Who taught by the Pen
Taught Man, that which he knew not’

Rasūlullāh ﷺ returns to Makkah

Going back to the Ḥadīth which was narrated by ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا, she narrates: “Then Allah's Messenger ﷺ returned with the Inspiration and with his heart beating severely. Then he went to Khaḍījah bint Khuwaylid رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا and said, "Cover me! Cover me!" They covered him till his fear was over and after that he told her everything that had happened and said, "I fear that something may happen to me." Khaḍījah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا replied, "Never! By Allāh, Allāh will never disgrace you.

You keep good relations with your kith and kin, help the poor and the destitute, serve your guests generously and assist the deserving calamity-afflicted ones."

Khaḍījah رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهَا then accompanied him to her cousin Waraqah ibn Nawfal ibn Asad ibn ʿAbdul ʿUzza, who, during the pre-Islamic Period became a Christian and used to write the writing with Hebrew letters. He would write from the Gospel in Hebrew as much as Allāh wished him to write. He was an old man and had lost his eyesight. Khaḍījah رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهَا said to Waraqah, "Listen to the story of your nephew, O my cousin!" Waraqah asked, "O my nephew! What have you seen?" Allāh's Messenger صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ described whatever he had seen. Waraqah said, "This is the same one who keeps the secrets (Jibrīl عَلَيْهِٱلسَّلَامُ) whom Allāh had sent to Mūsa عَلَيْهِٱلسَّلَامُ. I wish I were young and could live up to the time when your people would turn you out." Allāh's Messenger صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ asked, "Will they drive me out?" Waraqah replied in the affirmative and said, "Anyone (man) who came with something similar to what you have brought was treated with hostility; and if I should remain alive till the day when you will be turned out then I would support you strongly." But after a few days Waraqah died and the Divine Inspiration was also paused for a while.

Wuḍūʿ and Ṣalāt

Rasūlullāh ﷺ received the first revelation and the period of the final Prophethood began. Before we go into what happened in the first few years of Islām, a very important event took place. In Ibn Ishāq, it mentions that Jibrīl عَلَيْهِ ٱلسَّلَامُ came to Rasūlullāh ﷺ. He struck his heel on the earth and a spring gushed out.

Jibrīl عَلَيْهِ ٱلسَّلَامُ performed Wuḍūʿ to show Rasūlullāh ﷺ how to purify himself for Ṣalāt. Jibrīl عَلَيْهِ ٱلسَّلَامُ then showed him how to read Ṣalāt. He showed him all the different positions, rukn in Ṣalāt, the qiyām, rukūʿ, sajdah etc. Rasūlullāh ﷺ followed his example and when he returned to his house taught his wife Khaḍījah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا what he had learnt and they prayed together.

From this we can see the origin of how Rasūlullāh ﷺ learnt to perform Wuḍūʿ and Ṣalāt.



The Early Muslims

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ had received the Revelation and those within his household accepted his call. Firstly, it was the dear wife of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, the mother of the believers Khaḍījah رَضِيَ ٱللَّٰهُ عَنْهَا.

In Sīratul Muṣtafā, it mentions that the next person who believed in Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was her cousin Waraqah رَضِيَ ٱللَّٰهُ عَنْهُ. Next it was ʿAlī رَضِيَ ٱللَّٰهُ عَنْهُ who had been staying with Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, he was now 10. And After that it was the freed slave of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, Zayd Ibn Ḥārithah رَضِيَ ٱللَّٰهُ عَنْهُ.

Abū Bakr رَضِيَ ٱللَّٰهُ عَنْهُ

When the household of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ had entered into Islām, he called those people who were close to him. First of all, he called Abū Bakr رَضِيَ ٱللَّٰهُ عَنْهُ, his closest friend towards Islām. Without any hesitation whatsoever, Abū Bakr رَضِيَ ٱللَّٰهُ عَنْهُ accepted his call. So the first free man to answer the call to Islām was Abū Bakr رَضِيَ ٱللَّٰهُ عَنْهُ. He stayed by Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ side until the end of the Prophets life.

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ started calling people to Islām and many people including ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān, Zubayr ibn Awwām, ʿAbdul Raḥmān ibn Awf, Ṭalḥa ibn ʿUbaydullāh and Saʿad ibn Abi Waqqāṣ رَضِيَ ٱللَّٰهُ عَنْهُمْ all accepted Islām on his hands.

Dārul Arqam

As more people embraced, they started to use the house of Arqam رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ to congregate. Arqam رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ was either the 7th or 10th person to enter into the fold Islām. The Muslims would continue to gather here until Islām was strengthened with the reversion of ʿUmar رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ. After he became Muslim, they would gather wherever they wanted.

According to some sources the location of Arqam رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ house was at the foot of Mount As-Ṣafā, as you can see from this view of the Ḥaram.



Dārul Arqam رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ

The Open Call

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ continued to invite people towards Islām for 3 years in a personal manner. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُۥ وَتَعَالَىٰ then revealed, verse 94 of Sūrah Al-Ḥijr

فَٱصْدَعْ بِمَا تُؤْمَرُ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٩٤﴾

"Now, proclaim what you are commanded to, and turn away from those who ascribe partners to Allāḥ"

Verses 214 and 215 from Sūrah As-Shuʿarā' were also sent down.

وَأَنذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ ٱلْأَقْرَبِينَ ﴿٢١٤﴾

وَٱخْفِضْ جَنَاحَكَ لِمَنِ ٱتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢١٥﴾

"And warn the nearest people of your clan, and be kind with humbleness to the believers who followed you"

The Call to the Quraysh

Once Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ had been given the clear guidance, he climbed Mount As-Ṣafā; and called all the clans of Quraysh by their names. When they all gathered, he said to them: "If I was to tell you that behind this mountain there is an army which wants to attack,

would you believe me?" They all said that we would of course believe you, we have never heard anything from you apart from the truth. Then Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "I am warning you from a severe punishment". When Abū Lahab, his uncle heard Rasūlullāh ﷺ message, he said, "Perish you, is this the reason why you have called us? Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى then sent down Sūrah Lahab:

تَبَّتْ يَدَآ أَبِى لَهَبٍ وَتَبَّ (١)

مَآ أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُ مَالُهُۥ وَمَا كَسَبَ (٢) سَيَصْلَىٰ نَارًا ذَاتَ لَهَبٍ

(٣) وَٱمْرَأَتُهُۥ حَمَّالَةَ ٱلْحَطَبِ (٤)

فِى جِيدِهَا حَبْلٌ مِّن مَّسَدٍ (٥)

Perish the two hands of Abū Lahab, and perish he! Neither his wealth benefitted him nor what he earned. He will soon enter a fire, full of flames. And his wife as well, the wicked carrier of firewood.

Abū Lahab

Even though Abū Lahab was the uncle of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, he caused him many problems. As mentioned earlier, before the advent of Islām, his 2 sons, ʿUtbah and ʿUtaybah had been married to 2 of the daughters of the Rasūlullāh ﷺ, Ruqayyah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا and Umm Kulthum رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا. This made Abū Lahab their Father in Law.

After Rasūlullāh ﷺ open call, he made both of his sons divorce the daughters of Rasūlullāh ﷺ just so he could make him upset. But Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ had something better planned for them, for they were both married to ʿUthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ one after the other.

Delegation to Abū Ṭālib

Whilst Rasūlullāh ﷺ invited people towards Islām privately, the Quraysh had not really complained about him. Rasūlullāh ﷺ had now been given the command to invite people openly and he was stopping people from disbelief and polytheism. Rasūlullāh ﷺ was also telling people about the futility of idol worship and encouraging them to turn away from the false religion of their predecessors.

The Quraysh got increasingly worried about the situation and sent a delegation to Rasūlullāh ﷺ uncle Abū Ṭālib. Rasūlullāh ﷺ had been under Abū Ṭālibs protection since he was 8 and his uncle cared for him deeply.

The delegation said that your nephew says bad things about our idols and our religion, he says that our forefathers were astray. Either you stop him or don't come in between us and him. Abū Ṭālib turned them away in a kind manner and Rasūlullāh ﷺ continued as he was.

The enmity of the Quraysh increased again and they sent a second delegation to Abū Ṭālib. They said that they cannot let anyone say bad things about their forefathers and their Gods. Either you stop your

nephew or we will fight them (the Muslims) and one of the two parties will get destroyed. The Quraysh said this and went away.

When Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ came, Abū Ṭālib addressed him lovingly and said some men from your people came to see me (meaning the Quraysh) and related what had happened. Abū Ṭālib then told Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ to have mercy on him and on himself. He advised him to not force a burden upon him which he couldn't bear.

Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ said "I swear by my Lord, if they put the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left hand and tell me to leave this work, then I will definitely not leave it until Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ makes my religion victorious or I become destroyed" After saying this, Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ got up and started to leave.



Abū Ṭālib addressed him lovingly once again and told him to do whatever he wished, he will never surrender him to his enemies.

Islām Starts to Flourish

As each day passed, the Quraysh saw that the number of Muslims was increasing. The season of Ḥajj was approaching and news of this new Prophet was reaching people from outside of Makkah. When these people come and ask about him, what should the Quraysh say?



The Quraysh went to Walīd ibn Mughayrah who was one of their elders and asked him what should they say if anyone asked about Muḥammad صَلَّىٰ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. All of them had to have one answer. If their answers differed, then people will realise they are not sure themselves.

Walīd told them to tell him what their opinions were, he would listen to them and then decide.

The people started to present their opinions. They said we shall call him a soothsayer. Walīd said he is not a soothsayer, I have seen many soothsayers and he doesn't possess any of their traits and he does not talk like one of them.

The people then said, we shall say he is a madman. Walīd said, he is not a madman, I am also familiar with people like that and he does not possess any of traits of madness.

Some people said, let's say he is a poet. Walīd said, I am a poet myself and am familiar with all the types of poetry, but his words have no relation to poetry.

The people then said, let us say he is a magician. Walīd said he cannot be a magician. The people then said to him, what should we say?

Walīd considered their opinions and advised them to say that Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيۡهِوَسَلَّمَ is a magician and his words are also magic which cause differences between husband and wife, between father and son, between brother and brother. The people agreed upon this opinion.

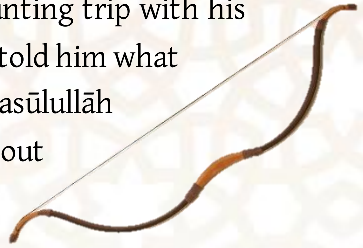
The Quraysh's Plan

The time for Ḥajj came and people started to come from outside. The Quraysh sent people to all the roads leading into the city. Whoever would pass, they would tell them about Muḥammad صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيۡهِوَسَلَّمَ. They would tell them, he is a sorcerer so stay away from him. This plan of the Quraysh didn't cause any harm to Islām whatsoever, in actual fact it had the opposite effect. All the people who were coming from the outside, now became aware of Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيۡهِوَسَلَّمَ.

Ḥamzah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ

One day Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.was passing by the mountain As-Ṣafa when he came across Abū Jahal. Upon seeing Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, he started to hurl abuse at him, but Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ remained silent during the whole time. A slave girl belonging to ʿAbdullāh ibn Jadʿān had witnessed the whole episode.

Ḥamzah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ was coming back from a hunting trip with his bow in hand. He met the slave girl and she told him what had happened to his nephew, meaning Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. As soon as he heard, he went out looking for Abū Jahal.



Ḥamzah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ had a habit that as soon as he returned from hunting, he would go straight to the Ḥaram. So as per normal he went there and saw Abū Jahal sitting with a group of people from the Quraysh. As soon as he saw Abū Jahal, Ḥamzah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ went up to him and hit him with his bow. He said, “You swear at Muḥammad صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, I also follow his religion”.

Some people got up to support Abū Jahal but he himself stopped them, saying that he had said many bad things to his nephew (Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) today.



After Ḥamzah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ entered the fold of Islām, the Quraysh realized that it would not be easy to cause harm to the Muslims from now on.

The Quraysh come to see Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

The Quraysh now decided to change their tactics. A group of their leaders including Abū Jahal, ʿUtbah, Shaybah, Walīd ibn Mughayrah and Umayyah ibn Khalaf held a meeting and decided to send ʿUtbah ibn Rabīʿah to go and talk to Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

ʿUtbah came to Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and said that there is no doubt in your lineage but the regretful thing is that you have caused a rift in our people. You talk ill about our idols, you say things about our forefathers so I want to say something to you. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ told him to go ahead and say what he needs to say, he is listening.

The Offer

ʿUtbah asked him, what is your purpose with you saying these words, if you want money, then we will gather so much money for you that even the biggest leader will not be able to equal you.

If you want to get married, then whichever woman you want to get married to or how many women you want to get married to, we will get you married.

If you want respect and leadership, then we will make you our leader. If you want to rule, then we will make you our king. If you are ill, we will get you treated.

The Reply

After hearing ʿUtbah, Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said to him, "Oh Abū Walīd, have you said what you have come to say?" ʿUtbah said yes.

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ then said, "In that case listen carefully to what I have to say to you, I do not desire your wealth, or leadership or rule. I am Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ Messenger, he has sent me to you as a Prophet, and he revealed a Book to me and commanded me to give you glad tidings of Allāh's reward and warn you about his punishment. I have conveyed Allāh's message to you. If you accept it then it will be success for you and if you don't, then I will be patient until Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ makes a decision between me and you" Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ then recited verses from the Quran.

ʿUtbah's Message

When Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ finished reciting, he said to ʿUtbah, "Oh Abū Walīd, whatever you needed to listen to you have listened, now you have a choice" ʿUtbah left and went back to his companions from the Quraysh but he was no longer the same person.

Abū Jahal said, this doesn't seem like the same ʿUtbah. ʿUtbah has forsaken our religion. ʿUtbah said, "I listened to his words, by Allāh I have never heard anything like it, it is not poetry, or magic or soothsaying, it is something else. Oh people, if you listen to my words then leave Muḥammad صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ as he is. I swear by God, the words I have just heard from him, very soon they shall have a status. If the Arabs destroy him then you have no reason to worry, but if Muḥammad صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ comes into power then his honour is your honour, and his

rulership will be your rulership because he is from your people." The Quraysh said, Oh Abū Walīd, Muḥammad ﷺ has done magic on you. ʿUtbah told them that, this is his opinion, you do what you want.

The Quraysh's compromise

The Quraysh now tried different ways to stop Rasūlullāh ﷺ. On one occasion, the Quraysh told him to stop talking bad about their idols, if you cannot do that, then one compromise is that for one year you worship our idols and for one year we will worship your god.

Allāh سُبۡحَانَهُۥوَتَعَالَىٰ then sent down Sūrah Kāfirūn:

قُلْ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْكَٰفِرُونَ ﴿١﴾ لَآ أَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٢﴾
وَلَآ أَنتُمْ عَٰبِدُونَ مَآ أَعْبُدُ ﴿٣﴾ وَلَآ أَنَا۠ عَابِدٌ مَّا عَبَدتُّمْ ﴿٤﴾
وَلَآ أَنتُمْ عَٰبِدُونَ مَآ أَعْبُدُ ﴿٥﴾ لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِىَ دِينِ ﴿٦﴾

Say, "O disbelievers, (1) I do not worship that which you worship, (2) Nor do you worship the One whom I worship. (3) And neither I am going to worship that which you have worshipped, (4) Nor will you worship the One whom I worship. (5) For you is your faith, and for me, my faith." (6)

The Quraysh seek help from outside

The Quraysh realized that all of their ploys were failing so they decided to send Naḍr ibn Ḥārith and ʿUqbah ibn Abū Muʿīt to Yathrib. Yathrib had many Jewish Scholars who had knowledge of the Prophets and were familiar with their signs. The point of this mission would be to meet them and get there assistance in trying to counter the message of Islām.

Naḍr and ʿUqbah went to Yathrib and told them about Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and what had gone on between them. The Jewish scholars advised them to ask Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ 3 questions which were:

1. Who were the people who were hiding in the cave and what was there story i.e. The Aṣḥābe Kahf?
2. Who was the person who travelled all over the world from east to west i.e. Dhul Qurnayn?
3. What is the soul?

The Jewish Scholars told them that if Muḥammad صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ answers the first 2 questions, but remains quiet on the 3rd, then know he is a Messenger who has been sent, otherwise he is a liar and a fabricator.

The Questions are posed to Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

Naḍr and ʿUqbah returned to Makkah and said that we have come with a decisive word. They went to Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and presented the 3 questions to him.

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ with the hope that the Revelation would come down with regards to these questions told them to come back the

following day. Rasūlullāh ﷺ at that moment had forgotten to say the words Inshā'Allāh.

After waiting for some days, Sūrah Al-Kahf was revealed in which the Sleepers of the Cave (Aṣḥābe Kahf) and Dhul Qurnayn were mentioned in detail. With regards to the 3rd question about the soul, the following verse was revealed which is in Surah Al-Isrā verse 85:

وَيَسۡـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ ٱلرُّوحِ قُلِ ٱلرُّوحُ مِنۡ أَمۡرِ رَبِّي وَمَآ أُوتِيتُم مِّنَ ٱلۡعِلۡمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلاً(٨٥)

And they ask you about the soul. Say, "The soul is something from the command of my Lord, and you are not given from the knowledge but a little."

This means that you will not be able to understand the reality of the soul. It is enough for you to know that the soul is such a thing that with Allāh's command when it enters a body it becomes alive, when it is removed then it dies.

Inshā'Allāh

With regards to Rasūlullāh ﷺ forgetting to say Inshā'Allāh, the following was revealed, verses 23 and 24 in Surah Al-Kahf:

وَلَا تَقُولَنَّ لِشَاْىْءٍ إِنِّى فَاعِلٌ ذَٰلِكَ غَدًا ﴿٢٣﴾
إِلَّآ أَن يَشَآءَ ٱللَّهُ وَٱذْكُر رَّبَّكَ إِذَا نَسِيتَ وَقُلْ عَسَىٰٓ أَن يَهْدِيَنِ رَبِّى
لِأَقْرَبَ مِنْ هَٰذَا رَشَدًا ﴿٢٤﴾

And never say about anything, "I will do this tomorrow," (23) Unless (you say – if) Allāh wills.' And remember your Lord if you forget, and say (to those who asked you about the story of the People of the Cave), "May be, my Lord will lead me to something closer than this to guidance (24)".

So this was the reason Sūrah Al-Kahf was revealed and also a lesson for us all to make sure we always say Inshā'Allāh whenever we intend to do anything.

Question after question had been asked to Rasūlullāh ﷺ, and he had answered all of them. Islām was on the rise. People were being invited towards Islām openly, the futility of idol worship was being discussed openly. The Quraysh could not bear it and their enmity towards Rasūlullāh ﷺ and the Muslims increased. They decided that they will cause Rasūlullāh ﷺ so much difficulty that he will stop inviting people towards Islām.

Summary

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ household comprised of many people. There was his immediate family as well his freed slave Zayd رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ, Umme Ayman رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا and later on ʿAlī رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ as well.

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ developed a love for seclusion and the Revelation started in the Cave of Ḥira when Jibrīl عَلَيْهِ ٱلسَّلَامُ came. The first few verses to be revealed were from Surah Al-ʿAlaq.

Among the first people to answer his call to Islām were his wife Khaḍījah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا, his cousin ʿAlī رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ, his friend Abū Bakr رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ and his freed slave Zayd رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ. Islām was initially spread quietly, until Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ received the Revelation to warn his kinsmen.

After the command came to him to invite people openly, many people from the Quraysh were hostile to Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and posed him question after question. They even tried to compromise with him and offered him leadership, riches or any woman in marriage.

The Quraysh were desperate and even sought help from outside but all of their efforts were in vain. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ would send down the Revelation in answer to their questions and more people were turning to the true religion on Islām.

The Quraysh now decided that they would try their best to make matters even more difficult for Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and the Muslims. In the next booklet we will Inshā'Allāh discuss the trials and tribulations faced by the Muslims.

Sīrah of Muḥammad ﷺ
Part 4 - The Early Years of Prophethood

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